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ABSTRACT

This document contains a mission statement, goals, and strategies and recommendations prepared by the Arkansas Governor's Commission on Adult Literacy. Goals include increasing from approximately 29,000 to 100,000 the number of adult learners engaged in pursuing at least one higher functional level of literacy by 1992-93 and quadrupling the involvement of the private sector through donations of money, personnel, facilities, and workplace literacy programs. Strategies and recommendations include the following: (1) reorganize and rename the Vocational and Technical Education Division to raise the stature and focus of adult education and improve coordination between public and private sector literacy efforts; (2) implement an annual statewide drive to generate resources from the private sector; (3) identify and eliminate legal/regulatory impediments that hinder literacy enhancement efforts and support services; (4) increase the number of literacy volunteers; (5) develop a mandatory preliminary screening and assessment process to identify at-risk adults who receive unemployment benefits or public assistance or who are in prisons; (6) implement mandatory participation in literacy enhancement programs for at-risk adults; (7) expand workplace literacy efforts; (8) improve literacy education in prisons; (9) develop a public relations campaign; (10) develop programs to address the need of persons with learning disabilities; and (11) increase the use of libraries and television in literacy education. (15 references.) (KC)

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ED307449

ARKANSAS ACTION PLAN FOR LITERACY ENHANCEMENT

Report of the Governor's Commission On Adult Literacy

Summer 1988

CE052557

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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Introduction/Overview

The apple has long been a recognized symbol of education. It seems particularly appropriate, then, that the Governor's Commission on Adult Literacy present Governor Bill Clinton with an apple--the Arkansas Action Plan for Literacy Enhancement (AAPLE).[1]

This Action Plan culminates ten months of work by the Commission consisting of extensive data gathering, input from both public and private sources and in-depth evaluation of all input by the full Commission and its working committees.

No attempt is made herein specifically to quantify the problem or to define the term "illiteracy" itself. The Commission concluded that it is abundantly apparent that Arkansas has a significant problem by any definition.[2] What is needed are recommendations sufficiently specific to constitute an action agenda to build on what is presently in place toward the level of accomplishment necessary for the future of our state, with built-in trackability and accountability.

To this end, in developing its recommendation, the Commission addressed two basic questions:

1. "Given the magnitude of Arkansas' illiteracy problem, what would constitute a meaningful level of progress to make extensive efforts worthwhile, and by when?"

2. "What organizational structure, fundamental changes and action agenda need to be put in place to enable those responsible to formulate and execute the detailed plans necessary to achieve the progress required?"

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[1] The acronym misspelling of the simple word apple is an intentional irony and symbolic of the illiteracy problem that Arkansas faces and that the recommendations in this action plan address.

[2] Books, papers and research on the subject constitute volumes, and definitional disagreements abound. The bibliography to this report includes numerous reference materials reviewed by the Commission.

In answer to these basic questions, the Commission presents its recommendations in the format of a proposed action-oriented Business Plan which includes a mission statement, specific goals and organizational and procedural strategies that need to be implemented.

In the mission statement, the Commission has attempted to capture the magnitude of Governor Clinton's charge to it and has tried to capture both the economic necessity as well as the altruistic desirability of adult literacy. The goals are stated in productive, positive terms (i.e., what will be produced, not what will be reduced) and set forth what the Commission believes to be realistic and attainable benchmarks that need to be reached to justify significant increases in resources. The recommended strategies specify what the Commission believes to be an appropriate action agenda. These recommendations address organization structure, programs, outreach, delivery systems and resources. Some of these strategies and recommendations are of a project nature. Others can be implemented with rules, regulations and legislation. The assignment of projects or government action will be the responsibility of the Governor, Arkansas General Assembly, Commission on Adult Literacy and/or the Adult Education Unit of the Department of Education.

It should be noted that specific "how to" recommendations have been intentionally omitted from this report (e.g., how to specifically structure a statewide awareness campaign, the specific nature and format of computerized instruction, the details of learning disabled programs, etc.). Instead the Commission concluded that specific plans to implement the action agenda must be formulated as soon as possible, but that such planning exceeds the expertise and/or resources of the Commission and constitutes "tactics" which would be better formulated by those to whom the action agenda is assigned for implementation.

In addition, although there was extensive discussion within the Commission, it was determined that some key, and perhaps controversial, questions would not be addressed in this report, but might well be considered at a later date. Major among those were the possibility of a totally separate board for the proposed renamed Division of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education, as well as terminology changes (e.g., "vo-tech", "literacy", etc.)

In the long-term, it is the Commission's fervent hope and strongest recommendation that education reform and dropout prevention efforts continue to go forward and be supported in earnest so that the problem of illiteracy will someday be minimized or virtually eliminated. That, of course, is the ultimate solution. But, in the short-term, Arkansas faces a clear and present economic and sociological danger that must be addressed to greatly reduce opportunities lost and costs incurred.

The Commission believes that the AAPLE it presents to Governor Clinton today, and the AAPLE corps of private and public citizens across our state who will make it work, will bring about the progress on this important issue that all Arkansans desire.

With appreciation to Governor Clinton, we submit this report with the hope and belief that the recommendations herein constitute an explicit, well-organized approach to increasing the literate population and the level of functional literacy in Arkansas. We recommend it be be implemented as soon as possible with existing resources and, as necessary, gubernatorial, legislative, public and private actions.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MISSION

Increase significantly the literate population and the level of functional literacy in Arkansas in order to enhance the self-image and employability of its citizenry and thus enable our state to move more completely and more quickly toward its economic and educational potential.

GOALS

1) By 1992-93 to increase from approximately 29,000 to 100,000 the number of adult learners enrolled in pursuing at least one higher functional level of literacy.

2) Develop achievement objectives for those enrolled in literacy enhancement programs and implement a tracking mechanism to measure achievement.

3) Quadruple the involvement of the private sector through donations of money, manpower, facilities and through a significant increase in workplace literacy programs.

4) Maximize the effectiveness of the public sector delivery and develop a strong coordination of public and private activities in the statewide literacy effort.

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The plan includes strategies and recommendations that, if implemented, will facilitate the accomplishment of its goals and the mission of this effort, which is to enable Arkansas to fulfill its economic and education potential.

These strategies and recommendations are:

1) Reorganize and rename the Vocational & Technical Education Division to raise the stature and focus of adult education and improve the coordination between public and private sector literacy efforts.

2) Implement an annual statewide drive to generate money, manpower and facilities from the private sector to supplement the limited public funds available to the literacy enhancement effort.

3) Identify and eliminate legal and/or regulatory impediments that hinder literacy enhancement efforts and support services.

4) Increase the volunteer manpower available for literacy enhancement efforts by forming an undergraduate "Literacy Corps" comprised of college students and increasing the use of professional, volunteer and adult organizations.

5) By mid-1989, develop a mandatory preliminary education screening and separate assessment process to identify "at risk" adults who:

-receive public assistance
-receive unemployment benefits
-are state prison inmates
-are alternative sentencing candidates.

6) Beginning July 1, 1991, implement mandatory participation in a literacy enhancement program, where available, for continuation of benefits for "at risk" adults.

7) Significantly expand workplace literacy efforts to reach those already employed but in need of literacy improvement.

8) Develop programs and incentives within the criminal justice system to improve literacy skills. (Sixty percent of the state's prison population has a deficiency in literacy skills).

9) Develop an ongoing statewide public awareness/marketing campaign aimed at students, providers and the general public.

10) Develop a plan to utilize existing resources for dependent care and transportation -- major barriers that prevent individuals from participating in literacy enhancement programs.

11) Develop plans to address the special needs of individuals with learning disabilities.

12) Implement or enhance successful teaching methods.

13) Increase the use of television, particularly the Arkansas Educational Television Network, in literacy enhancement efforts.

14) Increase the involvement of libraries in literacy enhancement efforts.

15) Develop and implement one rural and one urban demonstration project utilizing state stipends to pay for dependent care and transportation for individuals enrolled in literacy/adult education programs.

MISSION

To increase significantly the literate population and the level of functional literacy in Arkansas in order to enhance the self-image and employability of its citizenry and thus enable our state to move more completely and more quickly toward its economic and educational potential.

RATIONALE

Lack of basic literacy skills contributes to low self-esteem and unemployment/underemployment. The first step in eliminating these roadblocks to a bright economic future and maximizing the educational potential for Arkansas is increasing the level of functional literacy of many of the state's citizens.

The ability to cope independently in the community, the workplace and even the home is impaired for those without basic literacy skills. The belief that the lack of these skills renders them stupid for life limits their desire to seek help, and their belief is often passed on to their children. To raise the self-esteem of these citizens, the level of their functional literacy must be raised.

During the next 10 years, it is predicted that employment growth in the nation will be most predominate in service industries and technology-intensive manufacturing.[1] In all of these occupations and at all levels, Arkansas' workforce needs educated people who can learn new skills rapidly and adapt to change. To be competitive not only with the rest of the nation, but also with the world, the level of functional literacy for many Arkansans must be raised.

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[1]Hudson Institute for the U.S. Department of Labor. 1987. *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century.*

GOALS

1. **By the 1992-93 biennium, 100,000 Arkansans in need of functional literacy enhancement should be enrolled in an appropriate literacy program and pursuing a higher achievement level.**

RATIONALE

There currently are approximately 29,000 adult Arkansans pursuing a higher literacy achievement level. By the biennium year 1992-93, the Commission recommends that a goal be set of at least 100,000 Arkansans enrolled and pursuing at least one higher functional level of literacy. The Commission feels this number is the minimum required to have an impact on the economic and educational potential of the state.

Six target population groups have been identified to maximize efforts to reach the goal:

- Persons receiving public assistance (e.g., Food Stamps or AFDC).
- Persons receiving unemployment benefits.
- Persons in the workplace, but at risk of being displaced because of technology advancements or those whose current skill level restricts them.
- State prison inmates.
- Persons processed in the criminal justice system who may be eligible for alternative sentencing.
- General population (This group may include persons not falling into any of the above categories, i.e., bi-lingual persons, the disabled, and dropouts who have not yet moved into one of the other categories)

The Commission proposes that this goal be accomplished in the following increments and by the following target populations[1]:

Target Population	Present	Biennium Goals 1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Public Assistance	3,452	13,000	23,000	30,000	35,000
Unemployed	2,051	3,900	6,000	8,000	12,000
Workplace/Employed	21,241	20,000	26,600	36,300	46,100
Prison Inmates	1,923	1,400	1,800	2,200	2,600
Criminal Justice System	196	600	1,100	1,500	1,900
General Population	835	1,100	1,500	2,000	2,400
TOTAL	**29,698**	**40,000**	**60,000**	**80,000**	**100,000**

These populations present themselves in ways where there is an opportunity to identify persons who need functional literacy enhancement, refer them for counseling and provide help for significant achievement improvement.

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[1]"Present" target population figures were estimated by the UALR Center for Arkansas Initiatives using information gathered from the Division of Adult Education, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas Employment Security Division and the U.S. Census Bureau. These figures include the estimated number of participants in state adult education programs, workplace literacy programs, volunteer literacy councils and community-based organizations.

2. Develop and define specific achievement objectives for each target group that are meaningful to the student and the instructor. Develop and implement a tracking mechanism to measure achievement.

RATIONALE

There are insufficient mechanisms in place to measure the success of literacy efforts. Achievement objectives and a tracking mechanism that recognize the changing requirements for competency are necessary to determine whether current and future literacy efforts are effective and where improvement efforts should be focused.

3. A. Identify what is being spent in terms of money, manpower and facilities by the private sector on workplace literacy efforts.

B. By 1992, quadruple the involvement of the private sector through donations of money, manpower, facilities and through a significant increase in workplace literacy programs.[1]

RATIONALE

The private sector--business and industry--stands to gain a great deal by increasing the level of functional literacy in the state. Not only does the problem breed low-productivity, worker errors, on-the-job accidents, increased absenteeism and increased supervisory time, but the thousands of adults who cannot qualify for available or higher-skilled jobs represent a major loss of potential customers for products and services.

Other costs related to illiteracy, estimated to cost Arkansans $23 million each year, include public assistance, crime, unrealized tax revenues and remedial training programs.

With a declining labor pool, it will be necessary to raise the skills of current workers to meet the demands of tomorrow's higher-skilled jobs. Seventy-five percent of the people who will be in the workforce in the year 2000 are already there, so workplace literacy programs provide a cost-effective method of training.[2]

With limited tax dollars available for literacy programs, it will be necessary to quadruple private support if we are to quadruple the number of Arkansans enrolled in pursuing a higher achievement level by 1992.

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[1]The Commission recommends that resources be quadrupled because it recommends quadrupling the number of participants in literacy enhancement programs.

[2]Business Council for Effective Literacy. April 1988. *Business Council for Effective Literacy Newsletter.*

4. Maximize the effectiveness of the public sector delivery and develop a strong coordination of public and private activities in the statewide literacy effort.

RATIONALE

There are a number of ongoing literacy programs, both public and private. There must be a stronger partnership and better coordination between these sectors to ensure maximum return on the state's literacy enhancement efforts.

In some areas of the state there is no literacy program at all, while in other areas there exist duplication of efforts and competition for students. In many instances, this duplication and competition exist because there is little coordination and no clearinghouse to provide necessary information.

While it is difficult to quantify the effectiveness of public sector delivery and coordination, the measure of success will be in the satisfaction of the clientele and in the overall success of meeting other goals.

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ORGANIZATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Reorganize the Vocational & Technical Education Division of the Department of Education as follows:**

   - **Rename the division the Division of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education.**
   - **Create a new position to be called Deputy Director-Adult Education Unit on an equal level with the other deputy directors.**
   - **Create two associate directors reporting to the Deputy Director-Adult Education Unit:**

     1. **Associate Director-Volunteer Services-Private Efforts: The position would serve as a clearinghouse for information on public and private literacy efforts, provide assistance in obtaining funds, give advice on the best utilization of manpower and funds and provide coordination on eliminating duplication of efforts and maximizing the use of resources.**
     2. **Associate Director-Adult Basic Education/General Adult Education (ABE/GAE): Responsible for ABE/GAE programs.**

   - **The existing state board would oversee the division[1].**

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[1]The feasibility of a separate board to govern adult education was discussed, with strong opinions on both sides. Although there is no recommendation now, changes in the existing board structure might be a future consideration.

- **Continue the Governor's Commission on Adult Literacy, but reconstituted as an ongoing advisory board on adult education and literacy only. The board would coordinate with the Director of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education. It would be appointed by the Governor and meet at least once quarterly. Members of this collegial group should not be selected to serve as advocates of any constituency or special interest group, but instead should use their expertise and background to enhance the overall public and private efforts in adult education and literacy. The advisory board would have 15 members:**

  - **Seven members from the executive ranks of the business sector. Expertise represented should include marketing, public relations, legal and workplace literacy.**

  - **Seven members from the nonbusiness sector including one each with the following experience background: literacy council, education, social services, libraries, student who has successfully completed a literacy program, ABE direct service provider and religious-based provider.**

  - **The director of the Division of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education would be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the Commission.**

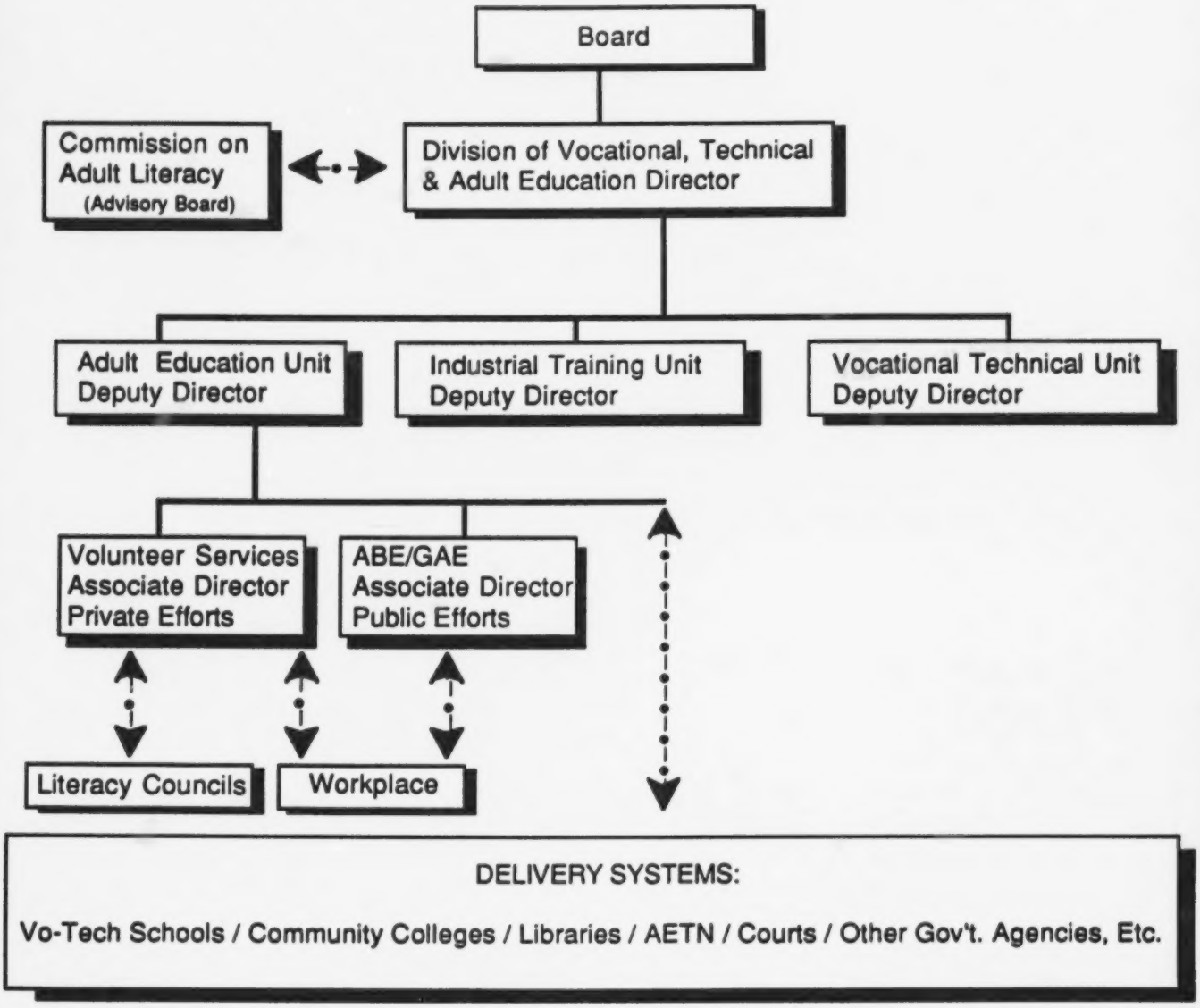
  - **Members of the Commission should include sex, age and racial balance and at least one of the members should also be a member of the Arkansas General Assembly.**

RATIONALE

The State Department of Education is the primary provider of public sector literacy programs. The department is also responsible for many other areas of education, including elementary and seconary education, vo-tech and industry training. Raising the stature and focus of adult education within the department and maintaining the Commission on Adult Literacy as an advisory board will maximize the effectiveness of program delivery.

Also, effective coordination between the public and private sectors is needed to minimize duplication and maximize effectiveness in literacy efforts.

ORGANIZATION CHART


Board
Commission on Adult Literacy (Advisory Board)
Division of Vocational, Technical & Adult Education Director
Adult Education Unit Deputy Director
Industrial Training Unit Deputy Director
Vocational Technical Unit Deputy Director
Volunteer Services Associate Director Private Efforts
ABE/GAE Associate Director Public Efforts
Literacy Councils
Workplace
DELIVERY SYSTEMS:
Vo-Tech Schools / Community Colleges / Libraries / AETN / Courts / Other Gov't. Agencies, Etc.

{Indicates a two-way flow of information, not a "supervisory relationship"}

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Organize and implement a private annual statewide "Literacy Support Drive" to generate money, manpower and facilities from the private sector.**

RATIONALE

Because of a limited amount of public funds available to the literacy effort, the Commission recommends the private sector assist in providing financing, manpower and facilities. Examples of the types of things that could be provided include:

- Funding of executive director of the Literacy Commission to act as a full-time liaison with the Adult Education Unit.
- Funding of salaries and necessary expenses of the Volunteer Literacy Coordinator and staff in the Adult Education Unit.
- Ongoing public awareness/marketing campaign.
- Transportation and dependent care needs.
- Literacy Council efforts.

In addition to increasing their funding for the needed expansion of literacy efforts, businesses must join with public agencies in bringing added management, organizational and planning skills to an integrated overall effort. This joint endeavor is required to make any sizable inroads toward solving the literacy problem.

2. Increase the volunteer manpower available for literacy enhancement efforts by:

A. Developing incentives for an undergraduate "Literacy Corps" to encourage students attending state colleges and universities to participate in literacy programs.

Incentives could include, but not be limited to:
- **College credit**
- **Financial assistance**

B. Maximize the use of professional, volunteer and adult organizations, including but not limited to, RSVP, Area Agency on Aging, AARP, ABA Lawyers for Literacy, AETN/PBS/ABC Project PLUS task force, church groups, Telephone Pioneers of America and Arkansas Library Association.

RATIONALE

As the number of individuals enrolled in literacy enhancement is dramatically increased, there must be an appropriate increase in the number of tutors and supporting staff. The state's college students represent a great untapped resource that can be used for tutoring, clerical assistance and computer support.

Volunteer groups, in a partnership with the public and private sectors, can also be a valuable resource, especially where literacy efforts are limited or nonexistent.

3. Identify and eliminate legal and/or regulatory guidelines that impede literacy enhancement efforts and support services including dependent care and transportation (e.g., deployment of JTPA funds, organizational overlaps, burdensome program accountability, bureaucratic "red tape").

RATIONALE

There are a number of regulations, rules and other guidelines that impede literacy enhancement efforts in Arkansas. In some instances, thousands of dollars available for literacy programs are not distributed because of rules, regulations or "red tape". If not used, these funds are subject to repossession by the federal government.

Because the literacy problem in Arkansas is such a large one, these available dollars need to be channeled into literacy efforts. Students need a simple process to enroll in literacy enhancement programs. And while organizations that provide literacy training need to be accountable, they must be free to spend more time delivering services.

OUTREACH RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Develop by July 1, 1989, a preliminary educational screening and separate assessment process to identify "at risk" adults and a mechanism to implement this recommendation.**

   Target the following populations:

   - **Those receiving public assistance**
   - **State prison inmates**
   - **Those receiving unemployment benefits**
   - **Alternative sentencing candidates**

RATIONALE

A screening and assessment process is necessary to determine the number of those in need and their skill levels, information which is needed to determine the resources required for implementation of a literacy enhancement program.

The four target populations were chosen because those in need of literacy enhancement are most often found among the poor, the unemployed, the imprisoned and those on welfare. Because the individuals present themselves at places where they can be identified and assessed, there is a convenient opportunity to reach these populations.

2. **A. Effective July 1, 1989, where available, as a condition of continued public assistance or unemployment benefits, all recipients must participate in a screening process and if identified as "at risk," must participate in an assessment to identify their needs. If needed, counseling, case management and encouragement will be provided.**

   B. Effective July 1, 1991, as a condition of continued public assistance or unemployment benefits, where available all recipients identified as "at risk," after screening and assessment, must enroll and actively participate in literacy enhancement.

RATIONALE

This two-fold recommendation is designed to redirect the unemployment and welfare systems from providing maintenance payments to systems that promote retraining and helping individuals move to self-sufficiency and independence. It also provides needed motivation for those in need to participate in literacy advancement.

Increasing the literacy skills of these individuals would enable many to perform at the standards necessary for available employment.

3. Expand workplace literacy efforts by developing significant incentives to encourage Arkansas businesses to participate in or provide:

- **Workplace literacy audits[1]**
- **Workplace literacy programs**
- **Employee involvement in literacy programs as students and tutors**
- **Corporate and business contributions through money, manpower and/or facilities**

These incentives could include, but not be limited to:

- **Peer awareness**
- **Tax incentives**
- **Additional state purchasing preferences**
- **Recognition and awards for individuals and businesses**
- **Reimbursement (partial or total), for such out of pocket expenses as dependent care, teaching materials, transportation, etc.**
- **Matching grant program**

RATIONALE

It is estimated that 90 percent of the workforce in 1990 and 75 percent in the year 2000 will be made up of adults in today's workforce.[2] Since most of the individuals who need literacy improvement are already in the workforce, it is in the best interest of business to identify them through workplace audits and provide programs that would improve literacy skills.

Workplace needs are increasing quickly and we will face a growing mismatch between job skill requirements and the available pool of workers unless workplace literacy programs are implemented.

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[1]A workplace audit defines jobs in terms of their basic skills requirements and then assesses workforce proficiency in those skills. References listed in the bibliography contain more detailed information on workplace audits.

[2]Business Council for Effective Literacy. April 1988. *Business Council for Effective Literacy Newsletter.*

4. Develop incentives and programs within the criminal justice system to improve the literacy skills and self-esteem of individuals. Incentives may include:

- **Parole**
- **Probation**
- **Special privileges and time off**

Programs may include:

- **Teaching or learning in jail while waiting for trial, or if convicted, awaiting transport to prison.**
- **Teaching or learning in prison.**
- **Teaching or learning as a condition of probation instead of incarceration.**
- **Teaching or learning as part of parole requirements.**

RATIONALE

Both the public and the offender are better served by educating and changing offenders so they can emerge from the criminal justice system with the capacity to function better in society.

It costs more than $8,500 per year to house an inmate in the Arkansas Department of Correction and more than $20,000 per inmate to construct new prison space.[1] Sixty percent of the state's prison population have a deficiency in literacy skills. By improving the literacy skills of inmates so they can qualify for available employment upon leaving prison, the state will not only save money, but also gain tax revenue.

Also, the recidivism rate for parolees who have not finished high school or who haven't earned a GED is as high as 40 percent. The rate for high school graduates or GED is 11.8 percent.[2]

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[1]1987 Arkansas Department of Correction statistics.

[2]Business Council for Effective Literacy. October 1986. *Business Council for Effective Literacy Newsletter.*

5. Implement a comprehensive ongoing professionally developed statewide public awareness/marketing campaign aimed at students, providers and the general public. The campaign must:

- **Provide an extensive publicity and education program in Arkansas to increase the awareness of the problem of illiteracy and the fact that solutions are available.**
- **Motivate Arkansas readers to serve as local volunteer tutors for nonreaders.**
- **Encourage Arkansas businesses and individuals to contribute time and funds to solving the problems of illiteracy.**
- **Promote existing literacy programs, helping nonreaders "feel right" about seeking help.**
- **Provide awards and recognition based on the "AAPLE" theme to recognize outstanding service to an achievement in literacy programs.**
- **Encourage and expand existing public service campaigns such as the AETN/PBS/ABC Project PLUS into additional communities.**

RATIONALE

Present public awareness/marketing efforts need to be strengthened to reach more volunteers, businesses or those who need to participate in literacy enhancement efforts.

A survey conducted for the Commission shows several problem areas that an effective campaign might solve. They include:

- A lack of information about adult education/literacy programs.
- A disbelief there is a serious illiteracy problem.
- Only 17 percent of Arkansas businesses who responded to the survey are presently willing to allocate funds for literacy enhancement efforts.
- A major obstacle to the success of many literacy enhancement programs is the inability to identify and attract students.

6. Establish a process and network to:

A. Identify and utilize available dependent-care sources and facilities such as Head Start, churches and the Grandparent program.

B. Utilize available transportation sources such as school district buses, city buses and private organization vans.

RATIONALE

Many individuals cannot participate in literacy improvement programs because they are responsible for the care of small children, an aging or handicapped family member or other dependents. Another major barrier preventing individuals from participating is a lack of transportation.

The identification and subsequent use of existing resources for dependent care and transportation will provide a cost-effective method to allow students to participate in literacy ennancement.

PROGRAMS/DELIVERY SYSTEMS RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Identify and assess individuals with learning disabilities and implement needed support programs and staff development programs.**

RATIONALE

Individuals with learning disabilities have special needs and require special teaching techniques. As many as 30-50 percent of those in need of literacy enhancement have learning disabilities.[1] Once they are identified, an assessment of their intelligence, skill level and learning strengths and weaknesses will determine what type of special help they need.

In many instances, training also will be required in appropriate social skills, independent living skills and career guidance with specific help in finding and keeping employment.

Because all tutors and teachers may not be familiar with teaching techniques for individuals with learning disabilities, staff development programs also need to be developed.

[1]Statistics provided by Arkansas Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities.

2. Investigate, evaluate and implement or further enhance successful instructional programs such as:

- **Computer-aided instruction programs (including interactive, where appropriate)**
- **Functional context teaching[1]**
- **Competency Based Adult Education (CBAE)**

RATIONALE

Academic gains can be greatly increased by using exemplary instructional programs:

- Effective computer software and interactive video can increase retention and reduce teaching time. This is particularly true for literacy programs in the workplace that are of a functional nature and relevant to certain job skills needed. The use of computers also has been shown to be effective with persons who have special learning needs and disabilities, to maintain adult students' interest and allow the student to control the pace of learning and allow a greater number of students per teacher.[2]
- Functional context teaching holds promise in improving employees' ability to develop analytical reasoning skills, enabling them to more readily transfer their experience in one job to another.[3] This is important because in addition to the steady increase in the number of jobs requiring higher skill levels, the content of all jobs, including those at the low end, will require significantly higher language, math and reasoning skills in the future, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

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[1]Functional context teaching is an approach that builds on existing knowledge base to learn a specific skill.

[2]Marsh, George E. II & Price, Barrie Jo. 1987. *Developing the First Statewide Adult Literacy Model: A Concept Paper.*

[3]U.S. Department of Labor & U.S. Department of Education. 1988. *The Bottom Line: Basic Skills in the Workplace.*

- Programs organized by individual ability levels or goals, such as CBAE, allow the student to achieve at an individualized pace. This type of instruction increases teacher effectiveness and creativity, boosts student motivation, gives students clear and effective measures of progress and improves program accountability.

3. **Increase the use of television, particularly local access cable channels and the Arkansas Educational Television Network, in the literacy effort by developing programs designed to increase literacy skills. Videotape copies of these programs would be made available to groups and organizations including libraries, cable TV outlets, schools, Literacy Councils and Adult Education Centers.**

RATIONALE

Ninety-eight percent of Arkansas homes have television.[1] The Arkansas Educational Television Network is a very cost-effective way of reaching large numbers of individuals.

Television and videotapes can provide remedial programs at the student's convenience with fewer transportation and dependent-care impediments. The student also can work at his/her own pace to study and review material. Volunteers could be available to answer questions by telephone.

For many requiring literacy enhancement, television is a source of entertainment and information and it would be a natural and comfortable progression to move to teaching.

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[1]Data furnished by Area Marketing/Research Associates

4. Increase the involvement of libraries in literacy and adult education programs by serving as resource centers for the collection and lending of literacy teaching and learning materials, particularly material for adult "new readers".

RATIONALE

Libraries can contribute to literacy programs and efforts by acquiring and sharing special literacy teaching and learning resources including books, audio and video cassettes, and special audio-visual equipment.

The purchase of audio-visual materials can be made more cost effective by sharing through an interlibrary lending network which would involve Literacy Councils and other organizations and agencies, and would serve students and tutors located within library lending areas.

5. **Develop and implement one rural and one urban demonstration project using state stipends to pay for dependent care and transportation for individuals enrolled in literacy/adult education programs. This program would last approximately 18 months. At the end of the project, an evaluation, including a report to the Governor, would recommend continuation, expansion or discontinuation.**

RATIONALE

Two of the primary barriers in providing literacy/adult education are transportation and dependent care. An exemplary program that identifies ways to eliminate or reduce these impediments can help increase the number of participants in literacy achievement.

Two separate projects will provide a better understanding of the differences in barriers faced by urban and rural areas.

CONCLUSION

If all of the recommendations in this report are adopted, we can make great strides in reducing illiteracy in Arkansas. However, the need for educational reform and intensified dropout prevention transcend all of the recommendations set forth by this Commission.

The problem of adult illiteracy addressed by this commission is symptomatic of the need for further educational reform and intensified dropout prevention programs. As with literacy and adult education, there are a number of statewide efforts in dropout prevention, including the Governor's Commission on Youth at Risk. We recommend that strong support be continued for these efforts in the hope that the extensive literacy effort described in this report will no longer be necessary in the future.

APPENDIX A

COMMISSION ORGANIZATION

The Governor's Commission on Adult Literacy was appointed in September 1987. Commission members include:

Mr. Mac Geschwind, Chairperson
Mrs. Lee Jones
Rep. Jodie Mahony II
Sen. Stanley Russ
Dr. Gary Taylor
Mr. Claybon Thrower
Mr. Bob Ware
Mrs. Janelle Powell
Mrs. Barbara Broyles
Dr. Calvin Johnson
Mrs. Ovie Lawrence
Rep. Carolyn Pollan
Mr. Garland Hankins
Mr. Pat Murphey
Mrs. Helen Walton
Mr. Ray West

Ad Hoc Members include:

Dr. Barry Ballard
Mr. Bill Gaddy
Ms. Phyllis Anderson
Mr. Herb Sanderson
Mr. Don Rinker
Dr. Ruth Steele

The Commission held its first meeting on September 11, 1987, and organized into four independent working committees which met regularly from September through May. The committees identified and evaluated what efforts were currently going on in the state and researched what other states are doing. The chairperson and goals of each committee were:

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE, Calvin Johnson, chairperson
- Identify existing networking systems
- Evaluate certification and instructor training needs
- Review program format
- Evaluate program cost

OUTREACH COMMITTEE, Barbara Broyles, chairperson
- Prioritize markets/user groups
- Evaluate incentives for users and providers
- Identify recognition methods
- Evaluate the need for a public awareness campaign
- Evaluate potential motivational barriers and the need for revised semantics

DELIVERY SYSTEMS COMMITTEE, Carolyn Pollan, chairperson
- Identify existing and potential delivery systems
- Review physical barriers such as transporation and dependent care

RESOURCES COMMITTEE, Lee Jones, chairperson

- Assess existing resources, including money
- Explore new sources of resources

The Commission sponsored an adult education/literacy survey which was mailed to 1,600 Arkansas businesses, literacy councils, state agencies, churches, school districts and community colleges. The survey was the basis to:

- provide the state with a beginning point for measurement
- provide information about existing programs
- create a directory of services

The survey, which was prepared by Area Marketing/Research Associates, was partially funded by a grant from the Arkansas Business Council. In addition, Southwestern Bell Telephone, IBM and the State Chamber of Commerce made significant manpower contributions.

On January 29, 1988, a one-day Public Policy Seminar on Literacy was sponsored by the Commission to bring together representatives of both private and public groups interested in literacy enhancement. With an anticipated attendance of 150, the Policy Day drew a response of more than 250 concerned individuals who used a case study format to develop consensus solutions in the four key areas of programs, outreach, resources and delivery systems. A formal presentation was made to the Commission, which took the recommendations back to the respective committees for extensive evaluation.

In addition to the input received from the Public Policy Day and the survey, the Commission invited many individuals to attend the committee meetings to share field experience and to make recommendations.

On May 19 & 20, 1988, the Commission met to finalize its strategies and recommendations, which are included in this report.

APPENDIX B

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